

CLAIMS

We claim:

1 1. A friction clutch comprising:
2 a housing having an axis of rotation;
3 pressure plate connected to said housing for rotation in common about
4 said axis;
5 a force exerting arrangement supported against the housing and the
6 pressure plate;
7 an actuator mechanism which acts on said force exerting arrangement to
8 load said pressure plate axially with respect to said housing; and
9 a bearing arrangement for supporting said actuator mechanism axially
10 with respect to said housing so that said actuator mechanism is prevented from moving
11 in either of two axial directions with respect to said housing.

1 2. A friction clutch as in claim 1 further comprising a retaining element
2 which cooperates with said housing to form an opening, and a locking element which is
3 received in said opening to support said bearing arrangement in one axial direction with
4 respect to said housing.

1 3. A friction clutch as in claim 2 wherein said retaining element
2 supports the bearing arrangement in the other axial direction with respect to said
3 housing.

1 4. A friction clutch as in claim 3 wherein said retaining element is
2 formed with a support section which supports the bearing arrangement in the other axial
3 direction with respect to the housing.

1 5. A friction clutch as in claim 1 further comprising a plurality of pins
2 which support said bearing arrangement axially with respect to said housing both axial
3 directions.

1 6. A friction clutch as in claim 1 wherein said bearing arrangement
2 comprises a bearing component formed with a thread which engages a thread formed
3 on said housing.

1 7. A friction clutch as in claim 1 further comprising
2 a first retaining element fixed to said housing and supporting said bearing
3 arrangement in a first axial direction; and
4 a second retaining element fixed to said housing and supporting said
5 bearing arrangement in a second axial direction.

1 8. A friction clutch as in claim 7 wherein at least one of said retaining
2 elements is formed with a thread which engages a thread formed on said housing.

1 9. A friction clutch as in claim 7 wherein one of said retaining elements is
2 latched to said housing.

1 10. A friction clutch as in claim 9 wherein one of said retaining
2 elements is formed with retaining tongues which extend behind the other retaining
3 element.

1 11. A friction clutch as in claim 7 wherein said bearing arrangement
2 comprises a first sliding bearing element supported axially on the first retaining element
3 and a second sliding bearing element supported axially on the second retaining
4 element.

1 12. A friction clutch as in claim 11 wherein at least one of said sliding
2 bearing elements comprises a radial support area.

1 13. A friction clutch as in claim 11 wherein said bearing arrangement
2 further comprises a lubricant tight encapsulation of said first and second bearing
3 elements.

1 14. A friction clutch as in claim 1 further comprising
2 a retaining element which is permanently axially connected to said
3 housing, and
4 a locking element provided on said bearing arrangement, said locking
5 element having a first axial side which is supported against said housing and a second
6 axial side which is supported against said retaining element.

1 15. A friction clutch as in claim 14 wherein said retaining element is
2 connected to said housing by one of riveting, welding, brazing, adhesive bonding,
3 deformation, and press fitting.

1 16. A friction clutch as in claim 1 further comprising an insert element
2 which is permanently attached to the housing and supports said bearing arrangement in
3 two axial directions.

1 17. A friction clutch as in claim 16 wherein said insert element
2 comprises an axial stop which supports said bearing arrangement in a first axial
3 direction and a locking element which supports the bearing arrangement in a second
4 axial direction.

1 18. A friction clutch as in claim 1 wherein said friction clutch is a dual
2 clutch having a first clutch area and a second clutch area, each said clutch area
3 comprising a pressure plate and a force-exerting arrangement.